National Policy on Co-operatives

495. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalised a draft National Policy on Co-operatives;

(b) if so, the views of the State Government in this regard; and

(c) the action proposed to extend financial help to Co-operatives?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) It has been decided to formulate a National Policy on Cooperatives. The Draft National Policy on Cooperatives was discussed with the State Ministers of Cooperation in a Conference held on 30-6-2000 in New Delhi. The State Governments accepted the Draft National Policy in principle. However, in order to further fine-tune the draft, it was decided to constitute a Group of State Ministers headed by Minister of State (Agriculture). The Group of Ministers has held its first meeting on 17-7-2000. The policy would be finalised in view of the recommendations of the Group of Ministers.

(c) Financial help to the Cooperatives is being extended as per approved plans/schemes and budget allocation.

Suicide by farmers

496. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the suicidal deaths of the farmers in Mehbubnagar district of Andhra Pradesh on account of severe drought situation;

(b) if so, the details of such suicidal deaths;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there was starvation deaths in Mehbubnagar district on account of unprecedented drought situation; and

(d) what relief measures the Central and State Government have taken to help these farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that there are no suicide deaths either on account of drought situation or on account of starvation.

(d) The Central Government released to Andhra Pradesh Central share of Rs. 107.09 crore for 1999-2000 and Rs. 77.78 crore for 2000-01 under Calamity Relief Fund and Rs. 75.36 crore during 1999-2000 under National Fund for Calamity Relief. In addition, the Government of India took other measures which include free transportation of fodder and water by the Railways to the drought/ scarcity affected areas of the State, allocation of foodgrains at BPL rates for distribution in the drought affected areas, provision of maximum support by the RBI for conversion of short-term production loans into mid-term loans for drought affected areas, release of funds by NABARD from Rural Infrastructure Development Fund. The State Government had also reportedly taken measures for employment generation, fodder contingency programme, steps for making available drinking water and opening of cattle camps and fodder depots for the benefit of cattle.

Loss of Crops

497. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of loss in crops in the drought affected States;

(b) steps being taken to check such calamities;

(c) the details of schemes/projects being undertaken to tackle such drought;

(d) the estimated amount on each project; and

(e) the fund released/to be released till completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF